Greeting cards have colorful, historic sources

Each year researchers come up with more and more fascinating information about the origins of Christmas and New Year greetings.

Greeting cards are usually made of stiff paper or cardboard, but cloth, vellum, leather, celluloid, metal, wood, clay, cork, and new materials have been added to their designs. Cards and their messages vary in size. In 1929 an inscribed grain of rice was presented as a Christmas greeting to the Prince of Wales, and in 1924, President Calvin Coolidge received a Christmas card that measured 21 x 33 inches.

In ancient Egypt the New Year was celebrated by the exchange of symbolic presents such as scent bottles and scarabs inscribed "an ab nab" ("all good luck"). The Romans exchanged strenae, originally branches of laurel or olive, often coated with gold leaf. Symbols of seasonal good will, such as a Roman lamp and the figure of Victory surrounded by strenae, were combined on objects of baked clay, with the inscription "Anno Novo fausium felix tibi sit" ("May the New Year be happy and lucky for you"). The acknowledgment of the New Year with the exchanges of good will continued in Europe through the early days of Christianity.

In the 15th century, master wood engravers produced inscribed prints which had the same intent as the modern Christmas and New Year cards. One of these shows the Christ Child with halo, before a cross holding a scroll on which appears "Ein gust selig lor" ("A good and happy year"). During the 18th and early 19th centuries, copper plate engravers were producing prints and calendars for the New Year and greetings by merchants and tradesmen were common.

Recognized as the first Christmas card is one designed in England by J. C. Horsley, in 1843 for his friend Sir Henry Cole. An edition of 1,000 copies was placed on sale at Felix Summerly's Treasure House in London in 1846. They were printed by lithography on stiff cardboard, in dark sepia and hand colored. The design shows a family party in progress, beneath which is the greeting, "A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to You."

A similar card was designed by W. M. Egley of London and produced as an etching in 1848. While this card is more elaborate, its design suggests a relationship to the Cole-Horsley card. The same may be said of an American Christmas card of the same period, designed by R. H. Pease of Albany, N.Y., which bore the inscription, "Pease's Great Variety Store in The Temple of Fancy." Sentiment cards were exchanged and collected in the United States from 1830 to the Civil War and many have survived . . . among them an "expanding heart" Christmas present or greeting card in purse form, dating from about 1859.

Today you can say Merry Christmas in Macedonian, Greek, Hungarian, any one of 32 languages plus Braille. There are greeting cards available in our polyglot nation in Polish, Spanish, Japanese, Armenian, Croatian, Chinese, Macedonian, Portuguese, Greek, Swedish, Norwegian, Hungarian, Lithuanian, to name just a few. Distributed throughout the United States, many are produced in this country, others come from abroad.

It was noted by one of the manufacturers of these Christmas cards, that whenever there is turmoil or a revolution in a foreign country, the sales in that language spur. Since type faces in some languages are unavailable, many of the exotic messages are photographed from the originals. In the case of some Chinese messages, a waiter in a Chinese restaurant who is also an artist, wrote the greetings on a piece of paper from which they were photographed and reproduced.

¡Felices Navidades! Froliche Welhnachten! To you all!

Virginia Fibre Lists Wood Purchases for Week

Listed below is the total dollar volume of wood purchased for the week ending Dec. 12, 1977 by Virginia Fibre Corp. of Riverville. Purchases are listed by counties.

Accomack	159.60
Albermarle	4,261.11
Amherst	5,307.49
Appomattox	7,983.47
Bedford County	2,285.58
Buckingham	18,170.33
Pittsylvania	2,999.27
Prince Edward	3,869.27
Campbell	8,757.32
Cumberland	2,983.25
Fluvanna	312.32
Goochland	1,532.79
Halifax	2,020.67
Nelson	5,361.49
Powhatan	1,032.80
Prince William	800.14
Total	**$67,837.20**

We feel this information will be of interest to readers in this county and in all adjoining counties.

VA Questions And Answers

EDITOR'S NOTE: Following are representative questions answered daily by VA counselors. Full information is available at any VA office.

Q - Can I collect veterans educational assistance for completing work on my high school diploma?

A - Yes, and as an added bonus, veterans and eligible spouses may receive the assistance for high school training without charge against regular GI Bill educational entitlement.

Q - How do I get a release of liability when someone assumes my GI home loan?

A - Simply write VA giving your property, or have sold it, and want to be released from liability on the loan. VA will send you a list of requirements. If these are fulfilled and your buyer meets VA's income and credit requirements, VA can release you from liability on the loan, even though your lender may not release you.

Q - Is a veteran who is totally blind due to a service - connected disability entitled to the automobile grant?

A - Yes, a veteran whose blindness resulted from a service - connected disability is eligible for an automobile grant, provided the individual who will operate the vehicle is licensed by the state in which he or she lives.

'GET ACTION GET RESULTS WITH CLASSIFIED ADS

CHRISTMAS WRAP

Aluminum foil makes any gift special looking and is especially marvelous for wrapping those odd shaped things that never seem to fit into any box. Wrap and tie with brightly colored yarn . . . several different colors at the same time!

Good Wishes at Christmas

To all the friends we have had the pleasure of serving — wishes for a warm, old-fashioned, family-filled holiday.

Best Furniture Co.
ROUTE 460 EAST
APPOMATTOX, VA.

Christmas Greetings

Delight fills our hearts, young and old alike, on Christmas morn. May the joy that illuminates your home remain with you all through the holiday.

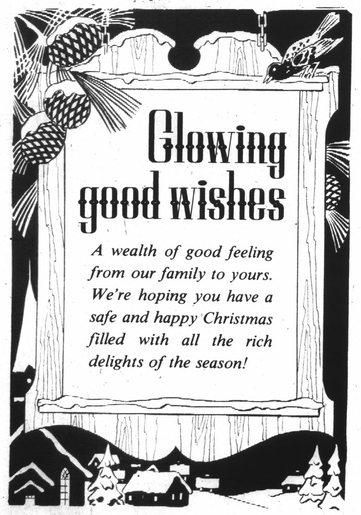
Harvey's Market

Pamplin, Va.

Falling River Realty Co., Inc.
Appomattox, virginia

REALTOR® real estate insurance

"In the Heart of Historic Virginia" DAN W. HERNCALL — BROKER



Dan W. Herncall Marvin Horne
James A. Eden Bill MacDonald
Nalwyn Morris

PO BOX 030 triangle plaza (804) 352-7195

Our Wish for the Christmas Season is Peace and Goodwill to everyone. That is the spirit and the meaning of Christmas which celebrates the birth of the Prince of Peace. Have a Happy and Holy Holiday.

Farmers National Bank
Main Street & Triangle Plaza Shopping Center
Appomattox, Va.

OUR HOME OWNED AND OPERATED BANK
APPOMATTOX, VA.
MEMBER FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION
MEMBER FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

THEN and NOW!

By Frances H. Paulette

Aware that I was (as usual) a bit on the late side for my appointment, I quickened my step as I hurried up the walk to the home of my hostess.

Pressing the doorbell, I wondered why I was not met at the door in the usual manner. On previous occasions the door was opened before I even had time to ring the bell. After persistent ringing there was still no answer. Glancing through the door, I understood perfectly.

With her feet propped comfortably on the footstool, she was sleeping soundly. Was I imaging it or was the dear lady smiling? A second glance told me she was, indeed, smiling!

* * *

The year could have been 1915, 1916, or even 1917 for Mary Inge, then Mary Moses, worked those three years in the store of her uncle L. E. Smith (affectionately called Len).

It was the week before Christmas and the General Store and the whole community of Appomattox was, to quote from the song, "beginning to look a lot like Christmas." For a young lady of about 17 or 18 years of age, getting ready for Christmas at the general store was something to remember!

Mary Moses and her co-worker and also her cousin, Ilene Smith arrived at the store promptly; they knew there was much to be done. The boys who worked in the store and lived upstairs were on hand early to get the fire going and sweep out the store.

Around the big, black, pot-bellied stove in the center of the store was the gathering place for all the gentlemen of Appomattox (and maybe sometimes even a few who were not so gentle!). Since most of these gentlemen had taken up the habit of chewing tobacco, there naturally had to be a place to spit. A gentleman could, if he so desired, carry along with him a brass spitton, or to save trouble, find an empty can at the store. This wasn't necessary at Smith's Store.

For the convenience of his customers, the tobacco-chewing ones, Mr. Smith had devised a sort of "spitting area". It was a frame-like enclosure, just a few inches high, built around the stove and filled with sawdust. One of the "getting ready" chores before Christmas was to fill this space with new, clean, sawdust. After this was accomplished and the store swept clean, then Mary and Ilene would dust until every speck of dust was gone.

Was the store decorated? But of course! Not at all like we know decorating today, but there were reminders that the holiday season was fast approaching. Red and green crepe paper was carefully cut in narrow strips and then entwined here and there to add a festive touch. Sometimes a bit of tinsel was added and even now and then a few red paper bells were hung in the window. No doubt about it, it was getting that Christmas look.

Along about Dec. 1, or as near to that date as possible, Mr. Smith would go to Lynchburg to buy toys from which his customers would make their selection for Christmas.

At L. E. Smith's Store the subject of Christmas was never mentioned until two weeks before the actual day. Since this was the week before Christmas, the toys were already unpacked and put on display. Mr. Smith or one of the boys working at the store had already placed the chicken-wire barrier around the toys. This was to keep curious little hands and minds from becoming too eager!

Even though the children couldn't touch, they could look and look they did! There was a lot to see.

The little girls found dolls, lots of them to look at and wish for; most of the dolls were about 10 or 12 inches in length and sold for 25c each. Now if Daddy's tobacco had sold high or his business had been good, little sister might look with longing eyes at a more expensive doll. The body was made of white kid, bisque arms and legs, and human hair. This very lovely doll sold for $1.50 or $2.00 depending on size. To give dolly' a stroll around town there were doll carriages made of reed and even wooden cradles. There were tin tea sets and a toy piano that sold for all of 59c.

For the boys in the family there were express wagons, sturdy enough to haul the heaviest cargo any little boy could find; they sold for $1.00 and $2.00 depending on size; there were wooden blocks that were always a favorite. There were fireworks (they were permitted THEN); squibbs were 5c each pack and every little boy hoped for more than one pack! Roman candles were 5c each and an iron cap gun cost 25c. There were stopper guns and even a wind-up train and track for the high price of $1.00.

Of course there was candy at Christmas, and in some families I am told, that Christmas was the only time the children of the family had any candy. (I'll bet there weren't as many cavities THEN!) There was rock candy which was little crystals of solid pure sugar on a string; there was French candy, colored pink, yellow, or even white. An old favorite was chocolate drops and of course there was stick candy. Now which would you choose, peppermint or horehound?

If the youngster needed a pair of shoes for the holiday, often Father would put his child's foot on a piece of paper, draw around it and take the drawing to the store; from this the store clerk would decide on the shoe size needed by the youngster.

For the musically inclined members of the family there were harps that sold for 5c and even some as high as 25c. Christmas was not Christmas without a horn and every child usually got a horn whether he or she asked for it or not!

According to Mrs. Inge (Mary), 50% of the toys and gifts were bought on Christmas Eve; in fact the store employees often worked until midnight on Christmas eve.

When Mama began to plan the Christmas feast, she would either go to the store or send for whatever she needed. There were "sugar-plums" (similar to our raisins, but more like a bunch of dried grapes on a stem); (baskets of grapes for 50c each. She might need vanilla flavoring and chocolate in a block for making a cake. The eggs, flour, milk and butter she had at home. It was in fact, quite often the excess butter and eggs that she brought to the store to exchange, that made possible the purchase of gifts and toys for Christmas.

To go along with the home-cured country ham and chicken from the farm there were oyster, if the family could afford the luxury. They were all of $1.00 a quart and $3.50 a gallon. If the family couldn't afford oyster ,they could have canned salmon at 10c a can and cans of dried chipped beef. (Mrs. Inge remembers this as delicious.)

There was one highlight of Christmas Eve in the days of THEN that Mrs. Inge remembers well. The late Senator S. L. Ferguson, being a prominent business and political figure never had time for loafing. There was one exception. Every Christmas Eve he would do what he termed his "loafing" After the evening meal was over, Mr. Ferguson would go downtown and visit each place of business; in each he would wish them a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and visit a while before moving on to the next place of business.

Yes indeed, Christmas in Appomattox was good THEN!

* * *

As I gave the doorbell another push I called out, "Mrs. Inge, Mrs. Inge, I'm here! "With a start she opened her eyes, got up from her chair, and opened the door. "Frances, you won't believe it," she said. "I just had the sweetest dream, and do you know, everything was just like it used to be. Christmas was good!" Indeed it was, Mrs. Inge and Christmas in Appomattox is good NOW too!

NEED OFFICE SUPPLIES?

THE TIMES-VIRGINIAN
COURT STREET
APPOMATTOX, VA.

Outstanding FHA Officer For Nov.

Jane Gull

The outstanding officer for the month of November has participated in numerous FHA activities since becoming an officer. This past summer she attended camp, helped with the bake sale and attended the summer planning meeting. This fall she helped plan and set up the educational booth at the fair. She attended the federation officers workshop, helped with the faculty luncheon and helped plan and present one of the me-shops at the federation mini conference in October. She participated in the program for the FFA Hub Federation meeting and helped serve the meal after meeting. She also served at the Little League banquet in November. She helped plan the FFA-FHA volleyball tournament and took up money at the door. She went to Skateland in November. She has attended all executive meetings and has shown enthusiasm and cooperation in all her FHA activities.

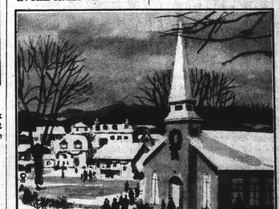
Your outstanding officer for the month of November is Jane Gull.

Congratulations Jane!

IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE IN THE TIMES-VIRGINIAN

Best wishes for health and happiness, peace and good will, to all.

Calvin + Earle Robinson



CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS

May the blessings of this joyous season surround you. May your holiday be merry and your happiness enduring.

Lloyd, Sarah and Bill Vaughan

STAPLERS & STAPLES and hundreds of other items can be found in our complete selection of office supplies. THE TIMES-VIRGINIAN.

DIAL GOOD NEWS 352-7900

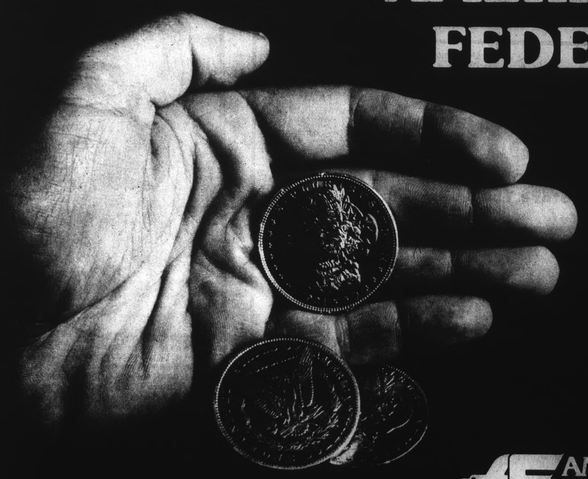
WANTED
TIRE CASINGS (DRY AND CLEAN)
Suitable For Retreading

$4.00 each
or
$4.00 IN TRADE ON NEW TIRE

Webb Tire Co., Inc.
Michelin-Delta Dealer
411 WEST CONFEDERATE BLVD.
APPOMATTOX, VA.
PHONE 352-7180
"SERVING APPOMATTOX SINCE 1948"

American Federal Savings & Loan is pleased to announce Silver Dollar Days at each of our seven locations. When you deposit $250 or more into a new or existing savings account, we will give you a free Silver Dollar. This is a 90% Silver Dollar, and American Federal was only able to secure a limited number, so hurry and get yours while the supply lasts. Sorry, only one free Silver Dollar per account.

SILVER DOLLARS FROM AMERICAN FEDERAL



AMERICAN FEDERAL

Member FSLIC

Triangle Shopping Center, Appomattox
Main Office: 615 Church Street, Lynchburg